

CLAIMS

1. A method for assigning an identity to an object
5 (10) in a database (1), which object includes a plurality
of coordinate points in a coordinate system representing
a multidimensional reality, c h a r a c t e r i s e d b y
identifying a first subset of the object's
coordinate points that have an extreme value in one of
10 the dimensions of the coordinate system (step 41);
if said subset includes more than one coordinate
point (step 42), further identifying from said subset
a second subset of object points that have an extreme
value in a second of the dimensions of the coordinate
15 system (step 41);
repeating the preceding steps until a subset con-
sisting of a single coordinate point (P_0) has been
identified; and
assigning the object an identity (11) based on the
20 coordinates (x_0 , y_0 , z_0 , t_0) of said coordinate point (P_0)
so that a one-to-one mapping exists between the identity
(11) and the coordinate point (P_0).
2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of
dimensions of the coordinate system is time.
- 25 3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the iden-
tity (11) is based on information as to the time (t_0)
when the object was entered into the coordinate system.
4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the iden-
tity (11) is based, if relevant, on information as to the
30 time (t_1) when the object ceases to be valid.
5. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding
claims, wherein the object is linked to a model drawn
into a graphically represented coordinate system.
6. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding
35 claims, wherein the object represents a physical object.
7. A method as claimed in claim 6, further compris-
ing the step of allowing the identity (11) to be linked

16

to a time interval (17, 18) that specifies during which space of time the physical object exists in the reality represented by the coordinate system.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7, further comprising the step of, when the time interval (17, 18) extends into the future, allowing the identity (11) to comprise an index (i) which permits the occurrence of several objects representing alternative future embodiments of the physical reality represented, which objects may have an overlapping extension in the coordinate system relating to time and space.

9. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the identity (11) explicitly comprises the coordinates of the coordinate point, e.g. in the form k_1, k_2, k_3, k_4 where k_i is the coordinate in dimension i.